

J 52

SAN FRANCISCO
Alcove
Case
Shelf

Christianity and Society

Man and Society In Religious Socialism

Paul Tillich

The Fellowship of Creative Conflict

William Clark

The Great Commandment

Paul Ramsey

Book Reviews



FALL 1943

25 CENTS

8/4

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

A Quarterly devoted to Christianity and Social Reconstruction

PUBLISHED BY THE FELLOWSHIP OF SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS

FELLOWSHIP MEETING

The winter meeting of the Fellowship of Social Christians will be held at Riverside Church, New York, on Dec. 29 and 30th. Since our fall meeting had to be abandoned because of a series of difficulties we shall hold a longer mid-winter meeting. The conference program is as follows:

The Principles of the Fellowship - Prof. A. T. Mollegen

The Church in the Present Crisis - Prof. John T. Bennet

The Peril of Economic Reaction

in the Peace - - - Prof. George Edwards

Head of the Dept. of Economics at City College.

The Peril of American Power

and the Religious Challenge - - - R. Niebuhr

Members of the Fellowship and readers of this journal who expect to attend the conference are asked to inform us in good time. We are prepared to offer lodging to most if not all out of town visitors through our hospitality committee. Please address: Mrs. Nola Meade, 3041 Broadway, New York City.

EDITOR

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

EDITORIAL BOARD

EDUARD HEIMANN CLIFFORD STANLEY RICHARD DAY A. T. MOLLEGEN
WINNIFRED WYGAL HARRY BONE ROSE TERLIN ARNOLD NASH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FELLOWSHIP OF SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS

NORMAN SIBLEY EDUARD HEIMANN RICHARD DAY WINNIFRED WYGAL
HERMAN REISSIG REINHOLD NIEBUHR HERBERT KING
DOROTHY FOSDICK JOHN DANIEL B. APELIAN
PAUL STREICH—TREASURER

Subscription Rate: \$1.00 per year; 25c per copy

4 Shillings per year in England

Published Quarterly

Mrs. Nola Meade, Secretary, 3041 Broadway, N. Y. C.

English Agent: Ronald Preston, Annandale, North End Road, London
N. W. 11.



CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

VOLUME 8

NUMBER 4

EDITORIALS

From Wilson to Roosevelt

There is no more striking difference between the last war and this one than the contrast between the Wilsonian peace aims and the complete lack of similar aims in the present conflict. Not that Wilsonian idealism actually determined post-war policy. It was, as a recent writer observed embodied "in the generous fiction" of the League, while the brutal realities expressed themselves in their own way.

Wilson was wrong in the method of achieving some kind of tolerable unity and order in the world community. He did not do sufficient justice to the realities of "power politics." But one appreciates his contribution to world politics more and more as one comes to realize that the statesmen of today, so afraid of making Wilson's mistakes over again, are in danger of robbing the approaching victory of any real virtue. President Roosevelt is reputed to be particularly anxious to avoid the conflict between "realistic" and "idealistic" sentiment in this nation, which caused Wilson's downfall. If this is what underlies our foreign policy one must sadly observe that "idealism" has been completely worsted in the famed tactical skill of Rooseveltian policy. The "realists" are being recruited for a policy of internationalism in order to prevent America from falling

back into isolationism. But the "realists" seem to have reduced the principle of international responsibility to the idea of expressing American power upon an international scale without too much regard for the rights and interests of others.

Our committee of Senators, which spent the summer roving the world, came back with a report that we are in danger of losing bases which have been constructed with American resources, and that the lease-lend arrangements are working too unreciprocally. They also reported that other nations were apprehensive about the unpredictable and irresponsible character of our foreign policy. But it was the first part of their report which has been given emphasis by the "realists."

The Consequence of all this "realism" is that the prospects of achieving some kind of tolerable unity between the nations is becoming more and more dim. There is little talk of any large and generous world organization which would at least lay the foundation for a political order commensurate with the economic interdependence of a technical age.

It must be gratefully recorded that the Moscow conference has allayed many of the dark forebodings of recent months and placed the whole problem of post-war cooperation between the great powers in a new perspective. Up to the

time of the Moscow conference the relations between Russia and the west had deteriorated. Russia was clamoring for a second front and had set up a "Free Germany" committee on its soil which explicitly challenged the "unconditional surrender" policy of the allies. It was in fact this "unconditional surrender" policy which had created a political vacuum on the continent which Russian diplomacy exploited.

The allied policy had made political warfare practically impossible by giving the democratic forces of the continent no hope of effective participation in the peace. The Russians may not have been sincere in their gesture for a "Free Germany." But they proved that they understood the political realities on the continent better than the Anglo-Saxon powers. The latter began to fear that Russia had ambitions to dominate continental reconstruction. These Russian ambitions were partly the expression of a Russian fear that the western powers intended to dominate the continent to the exclusion of Russia.

Up to the Moscow conference the problem of continental reconstruction had thus become a potential source of conflict between Russia and the west. If matters had drifted a third world war would have been in the making. Obviously when allies in one conflict seek strategic advantages over each other in the organization of peace, they are not organizing peace but preparing for another war.

The Moscow conference has changed this whole situation. It has kept the possibility of a genuine mutual accord open. The results of the conference may of course be overestimated. It is not yet apparent that agreements upon basic issues have been achieved. An agreement to discuss basic issues is however some-

thing of an achievement in itself, particularly considering the previous tension between Russia and the western powers.

It is probably erroneous to assume, as many observers do, that the primary difficulty between ourselves and Russia is the problem of Eastern Europe, where Russia is demanding a strategic frontier, involving the partitioning of Poland and Roumania and the absorption of the Baltic states. While many in the western world will regard the Russian demands as violations of the Atlantic charter and while the Russian demands are high, they would not be too high if they paved the way for a system of mutual security. On the other hand the real difficulties do not lie there. They are concerned with the problem of the organization of the continent itself.

The real issue is how the continent can be organized so that it will not become either a Russian or an Anglo-Saxon colony, or a cockpit for the rival power impulses of the great powers, nor yet a mere tool of the combined politics of the great powers. To achieve this result means that some kind of European federation must be made integral to the mutual accord which must be reached between Russia, Britain and America.

Such a Federation would have to draw the continental nations into the overall agreement with the great powers and yet recognize the power-political reality that two-quasi continental powers, Russia and Britain, and one non-European power, America, hold the effective authority in world politics today. Such a Federation could maintain the economic unity which Hitler forced upon the continent and could make it an instrument for setting bounds to the anarchy of continental nationalism. It could furthermore maintain the socialization of property which Hitler has

established upon the continent, detach it from the war-machine and make it serve the cause of the peoples welfare. Such a step would have the added advantage of achieving an economy which would be a synthesis between Russian communism and the economy of the west.

It is not suggested that this is the only possible answer to the continental problem. But it is quite obvious that any adequate answer to the problem must have more "constitutional" features than a mere partnership between the big powers. What is called for is a synthesis between Woodrow Wilson's approach and the piece-meal approach to world problems in which Churchill and Roosevelt seem to be engaged. The Moscow conference suggests that the very pressure of world events may drive the statesmen to more adventurous solutions than seemed probable a few months ago. On the other hand the force of national sentiment in all of the great powers is such that there is still a great danger that the peace will err on the side of "realism" as Wilson's peace erred on the side of abstraction.

Nationalism and the Possibilities of Internationalism

Whenever difficulties, such as we now face in creating a tolerable international order, prove to be as stubborn and as broad and deep as our present difficulties it is wise to look beyond the inadequacies of particular statesmen to the total historical situation. One might imagine statesmen wiser than either Churchill or Roosevelt in dealing with the vexing problems of post-war reconstruction. The former is essentially uninterested in any issue beyond the war and the latter seems to have become engulfed in military strategy. Roosevelt may in any

event lack the capacity to evolve a grand strategy for the essentially generous political impulses of his heart. But whatever the limitations of these and other leaders, we are obviously facing a more serious problem than any created by these limitations.

Perhaps the situation could be most succinctly described as the peril arising from the fact that international wars which must have as their ultimate objective the creation of an international community actually fan the flames of national passion and ambition in such a way as to make the attainment of the international goal almost impossible. The various subjugated nations know intellectually that their final security must be found in a system of mutual security. But the sense of outraged national pride is a more powerful force in their life than their rational international convictions. This has come to them by a more direct experience and is mediated by passion rather than mind. There is a great peril to the reconstruction of Europe in that mood of outraged national sentiment in all the enslaved nations.

But there is even a more important hazard in the development of the soul of the powerful nations, particularly Russia and America. We say particularly Russia and America because Britain, though it is not free of the temptation of introducing its imperial ambitions into the task of organizing the world community is nevertheless more certain than either Russia or America that her security must finally be derived from a system of mutual security. The real peril to the world community comes from the adolescent sense of power in Russia and America, two nations, ideologically so different and yet in many respects so similar. Both have enough power to indulge in the illu-

sion that they can go their own way. Both have ideological convictions, the one capitalistic and the other communistic which generate the fear that a generous partnership with other nations might destroy their economic system. Both still have a sense of mission in regard to their economic systems, though on the whole this sense of mission has been made into a corrupt instrument of national pride.

The case of Russia is particularly tragic because it now seems that the generous impulses of communist universalism and internationalism have been almost completely subordinated to the rising Russian nationalism. Russia will undoubtedly use continental communism where it suits its purposes. But it may also make peace with the German army and help to suppress communism in Germany. The mainspring of Russian policy is the desire to establish Russian security and power. Undoubtedly this ambition is partly derived from the desire to avenge the effort to make Russia an outcast in the western world during the past decades. It has been fed by the political ineptness of the western powers which has created the political vacuum in Europe into which Russian ambitions are now permiating.

Yet the American case is hardly less tragic. America is full of Christian and liberal universalism, much older and more deeply rooted in our tradition than even communist universalism. We are still passing a multitude of resolutions and preaching any number of sermons in support of the ideal that we have a moral obligation to place our great power in the service of the world community.

But all this intellectual activity seems to have little effect upon the vital motives of the American giant as he stirs from his sleep and discovers the larger world.

Isolationism is dead; but American imperialism is rising. We want to use our gold to dominate the worlds economic life. We are asking for strategic bases commensurate with our supremacy in the air and upon the sea. There are increasing indications that we will insist upon these things without making it plain that our power will be used in partnership with others. Not unlike Russia we want these things first and are not ready to commit ourselves on what we will do with them. We are just becoming fully aware of the full dimensions of American power and we seem intent upon playing the same pushing role in the world community which the rising bourgeoisie played in the several nations during the past two hundred years. The world is filled with apprehension about our policy; and these appresensions are the greater because there is no constitutional method of focusing the American mind upon the central issue in such a way that the problems of our policy could be settled beyond peradventure of doubt.

If the world should fail to achieve a tolerable unity of international life the chief, though not sole, guilt will undoubtedly rest upon Russia and America. And like all partners in mutual guilt, they will undoubtedly accuse each other of sole responsibility for the next decades. But the nicely calculated less and more guilt will hardly effect the outcome.

We do not suggest that the nationalism of our day, particularly the nationalism of the rising giants of the world, make our situation completely hopeless. There are fortunately still possibilities of tempering the pride of powerful nations by the humble recognition that the expression of unmutual power will wreck our world. But this task is much more difficult than we had assumed. A much deeper sense of religious contrition will

be necessary to produce the "peaceable fruits of righteousness."

It might be observed that Britain's primary weakness seems to lie in the fact that, suddenly confronted with the task of bringing two unruly and unpredictable giants under the yoke of mutual world system, it lacks the ingenuity and daring to achieve the desired result. We do not suggest that the task belongs primarily to Britain. But her impulses of survival are more thoroughly engaged in the necessity of a system of mutual security than the other two powers; and she has a greater fund of political experience to draw upon in contriving the desired end. But for once the task is too revolutionary for the caution of "muddling through." The idea of "muddling through" is valid enough inasfar as it means working with the actual stuff of history and not trying to force abstract plans upon complex realities of history. But muddling through also means taking cautious steps. We are in a moment of history when some daring is required.

Republican Internationalism

Deneen Watson was chairman of the Republican Post-War Policy Association which was organized some months ago to fight isolationism in the Republican party. Now Mr. Watson has come out for Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, for the Presidency. Mr. Johnston is the gentleman who believes that if only Britain and America can agree they can pretty well divide the world between them and keep "free enterprise" as the Chamber of Commerce conceives it, going for a long while. All of which proves that Republican internationalism may be a wolf in sheep's clothing. We do not suggest that Willkie's internationalism is of that type. It is not yet quite

clear of what type it is. But at any rate he is opposed to any exclusive alliance and insists that a policy of Anglo-American cooperation without a larger framework of international commitments would lead to war, as indeed it would.

Conflict in the Democratic Cause

A bill for a federal subsidy for education has been defeated in a senatorial committee because the northern representatives insisted on writing a clause into it prohibiting discrimination in the use of the funds on account of race, creed or color. Federal support of education has come to be recognized as the only method of raising the educational standards of the poorer, particularly the southern states. The southern states were quite ready to accept this federal aid but they did not want the negroes to benefit from it. It would of course have been a stultification of the democratic cause to raise the educational level of the white southern schools and leave the negro schools untouched. The northern representatives were therefore right in insisting upon their clause. But without southern support the bill can not be passed. This is a tragic illustration of the depth of the race problem in our nation.

Taxation and Inflation

The government's financial problem has nothing to do with the production side of the war effort. No gun is added to our armaments by increasing the flow of money into the coffers of the Treasury. We are in a planned economy in which the plan for arms, ship, etc., production is laid down without reference to financial considerations. But the fiscal policy does determine whether or not there will be inflation, a question which

affects the war effort indirectly through its influence upon morale and upon the social stability of the country.

Those who produce armament and war equipment receive salaries and wages; but they do not produce equivalent consumers goods which could be purchased with these wages. Hence there is a dangerous disproportion between purchasing power and purchasable goods, resulting in bidding up the prices of the limited goods available. That means inflation. If all prices and incomes rose in the same ratio and at the same pace nothing would be changed. But this is not the case. Wages, interest and other long term contractual revenues remain quite unchanged. To prevent this injustice of inflation the "inflationary gap" must be closed; the excess purchasing power must be drained off by taxes and loans.

Experience proves that not all excess purchasing power makes itself effective in the consumer market. When necessities are secured and luxuries are not to be had people will leave their money idle. This results in informal savings, which serves the purpose quite well provided the money is really kept locked up. This is possible, however, only if there is strict price control and rationing. Without rationing and price control the force of unused purchasing power may burst the dam and inundate our whole economic system.

Yet the larger the excess purchasing power becomes with increased arms production the more perilous is its force, no matter what dams are built to restrain it. It is therefore safer to drain it off. Hence the Third War Loan Drive and the Treasury's new tax proposals which first

demand sixteen billion in new taxes and finally reduced the demand to ten and a half billion. Thus the income tax which brought a billion before the war is scheduled to rise to 25 billion. The Treasury's plan provides for some new exemptions such as cancellation of the Victory tax and some reimbursements after the war, thus making a portion of the tax a forced loan.

The administration's program has run into stiff opposition in congress. It is now quite apparent that congress will not pass the administration tax plan and will secure only a fraction of the taxes contemplated in the plan. Congress has two counter proposals. One is a paring of bureaucratic costs in Washington. This is the sale tax. The first proposal may have some intrinsic merit but it has nothing to do with the problem before us because it would not effect the "inflationary gap" in the slightest. The sales tax is strenuously opposed by the labor unions, who insist that it would make wage increases necessary to catch up with the living costs increased by the tax. The debate thus far as not distinguished between a crude and indiscriminate sales tax, such as in effect in Russia; and a more refined and graduated tax as is used in Britain. The latter type of tax, in which luxuries are taxed more steeply than necessities, would certainly be preferable to inflation.

The greatest peril at the moment is that congress will not enact any adequate tax legislation. Its opposition to the administration is highly political and irresponsible, the more so because it is as loath to enact adequate rationing and price control legislation as to pass responsible tax bills.

FELLOWSHIP NOTES

Roger Barney, who is Chaplain in the Navy is stationed at Parris Island, South Carolina.

Cornelius Lowe has been assigned to sea duty in the Pacific, after a year of service in a Naval Base.

Charles Stinnette has finished his Army Chaplain's training at Harvard.

Jack Daniels is entering the Army Chaplaincy shortly.

Sergeant Don McKee, a loyal member of our Fellowship, who used to be C. I. O. organizer in the South, has been transferred to Camp Sibert, Alabama.

After serving in the Navy School in Hutchinson, Kansas, Chaplain E. A. de Bordenave has been assigned to sea duty.

We have had indirect word that Richard Day, Army Chaplain, has been decorated for bravery in rescuing wounded in the fighting in Sicily. The editor had a long letter from Dick revealing his continued theological interest even while performing his arduous Chaplaincy task.

Chaplain Charles Arbuthnot has been

sent overseas after serving in Camp Edwards, Massachusetts. Chaplain Paschal Fowlkes is at Fort Benning, Georgia. Chaplain Gregory Lock is at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Chaplain Francis B. Sayre and Chaplain William Jackson Jarman are at sea in the Pacific.

Chaplain Clarence Kilde is on duty with the Army somewhere in the Pacific. He writes: "Last Sunday we observed the Communion Service during which I conducted a confessional service at the altar from The Book of Common Prayer. Then the soldiers came in small groups to kneel at the slab wood chancel rail to receive into their rough hands the wafer I had dipped in the Chalice of wine, the while giving the Words of Institution. Where I will end up ecclesiastically after this war, God only knows. This year's experiences have driven me back upon Classic Christianity as never before. My pipe dream is that on my return I shall first spend at least a summer session at Union to see if I can fit scattered ecclesiastical pieces together into some kind of pattern."

MAN AND SOCIETY IN RELIGIOUS SOCIALISM

By PAUL TILLICH

Introduction:

Definition of the Problem

Religious Socialism in the form in which it has developed in Central Europe after the first world war is not a party movement. It had and has followers in different parties, from the Young-Conservatives in Germany and Great Britain to the independent sympathizers of Communism, and in every party between them. On the other hand, Religious Socialism is not a mere religious or philosophical theory although it gave important impulses to theology and philosophy, especially in the realms of the interpretation of history and the doctrine of man. It is not a mere theory because it implies a political faith and a political will and is supported by all kinds of people, most of them neither theological nor philosophical, many of them extremely suspicious of traditional theology and philosophy. Religious Socialism is a **movement** which tries to carry into reality some principles, ideas, and demands, in the most different groups, parties, and social levels and in the most different situations and activities.

The political faith of Religious Socialism, in its most general formulation, is **firstly** the conviction that the bourgeois period of history is coming to a catastrophic end and that a new fundamentally different period is at hand, and will be born in the pains of world wars and revolutions in the midst of which we live. The faith of Religious Socialism is

secondly the conviction that the period to come will have a character for which the word "socialism" is a somehow old fashioned term and which, perhaps, better could be called a new collectivism, based on social planning. Religious Socialism had **thirdly** the conviction that without the acceptance of a religious foundation and the symbols expressing it no system of a planned society can escape a speedy self-destruction; whereby the religion, presupposed, is rooted in the prophetic Christian tradition which alone of all world religions takes history and social justice seriously. This faith implies some principles and has produced some consequences the explanation of which could be done only a series of papers on Religious Socialism as such. This is not our task today. We are discussing the doctrine of man in its relation to society with respect to the demands of the coming social reconstruction; and I have been asked to develop the contribution to this task which might be derived from the thought of Religious Socialism. This implies that the faith itself is presupposed in my present day discussion.

Religious Socialism, in consequence of its religious foundation, was always conscious of the necessity of a doctrine of man. And if it had not been conscious of it its socialistic and religious foes would have made it immediately conscious. And if the attack of the foes has not brought the necessity to the at-

tention of the Religious Socialists an inner tension in most of its earlier leaders would have shown it to them. I can speak about this tension, not only in my own name but also in the name of some other members of this movement. We came to Religious Socialism against our will; we do not like it, we often confess that we would not be able to live in the world it expects. But we are forced to see not only its inescapable coming but also its spiritual and moral justification. We do not like it; nevertheless we cannot look away from it; on the contrary we must fight for it, although mostly on the losing side; first in Germany, now in many other countries. And if we are on the winning side it would be for us the destruction of many great traditions which still lived in the former period of bourgeois society and now are doomed like the glory of the old European cities. This very personal, although not individual, conflict reveals contrasts in the nature of man and has compelled us to ask the question of man as man.

There are four main groups of problems in which the doctrine of man has a special bearing on the theory and practice of Religious Socialism: 1) The question of **man's permanent and his variable nature**, the basic problem without the solution of which no doctrine of man can even be conceived of. 2) The question of the **historical** distortion and perfection of human nature, usually called the question of "Utopianism" in the discussion of which the movement of Religious Socialism originates. 3) The question of **man's creative freedom within society**, i.e., the question of the individual within the collective, the most controversial problem in the present political discussion. 4) The question of the **spiritual and material forces in man's historical existence**; a group of problems

each of which could head a special chapter and which are all rooted in the fundamental discord about the relation between the material and the spiritual forces in human nature.

It happened that although these four groups of problems were envisaged for my paper long ago, they came up one after the other in the discussions of this group, so that my duty as consultant to sum up the main points of these discussions coincides happily with the original plan of my paper.

I. The question of man's permanent and of his variable nature.

The answer to this question decides about the possibility of a doctrine of man. The attempt to state a "nature of man" which transcends all possible variations of human nature has been attacked from different sides. Two of them can be dismissed by a merely logical operation. The first is the belief that individual men or mankind as a whole can reach a supra-human, "angelic" stage and that it is impossible to limit the nature of man to the "pre-angelic" stage known to us. In naturalistic terms a warning against any limitation of human possibilities was given by Nietzsche and his biological followers who envisage an evolution of man to a higher and qualitatively different organic being. In the opposite direction it is often said that you cannot distinguish man from animals and, consequently, are unable to give a specific definition of human nature; the difference is only quantitative. The argument against the first challenge is that in the moment in which that superhuman or angelic being has become a fixed genus which reproduces itself in every individual, it would become senseless to call it man. There may be such a jump from man to angel or superman. This does

not exclude the possibility of a doctrine of man. And to those who deny a clear distinction between animal and man we answer: It is the matter of logical decision of which characteristics we assert that they constitute a new genus. If, for instance, we say that we call man that being which can communicate through universals, and if amongst the assumed animals beings of such a character were found we would call them men.

Much heavier are the protests against a doctrine of man from the side of descriptive anthropology and above all from Marxist sociology. The protest of the former group is based on the deep impression made by the variety of cultures on the scientific observer. But it is easy to argue that the very concepts of "culture" and "anthropology" presuppose the concept of a being which is able to have culture and, for this reason, is the subject of a special science. The Marxians of today fight a more existential struggle against a doctrine of man. They believe with Marx that man is that being which has to reproduce himself by material activity; and they do not want any limit to be set to this activity. They state that those who have developed a doctrine of man, Christians and naturalists, have done so in order to show that no revolutionary action will essentially improve the happiness and goodness of mankind, and that, therefore, political conservatism is the wisest form of politics, not only in the interest of the ruling but also of the ruled classes. Sometimes these Marxists use Christian arguments. They say that the present society is distorted to such a degree that the true and essential picture of man is entirely obscured. As Karl Barth and his followers say that we do not know anything about the true nature of man because the image of God is destroyed and only on

the basis of salvation we can know something of it, so these Marxians say that not before the day of the successful revolution can a doctrine of man be written. Only in the new social order we shall know which possibilities are in man.

But even these Barthians and Marxists always speak and act as if they had a doctrine of man. Man could not call himself a sinner and in need of salvation if he had no knowledge at all about what he ought to be, that is about his essential goodness. And Marx could not talk permanently about the dehumanization in early capitalism without a vague picture of a really human society. They all have a doctrine of man. They do not want to confess it for reasons of political or religious strategy. But this is, in the long run, bad strategy. It has made the Barthians fanatical and the Marxians ignorant about the human beings with whom they had to work.

If the Marxians and many American pragmatists say that a doctrine of man is impossible they refer to the changes produced by man's historical self-reproduction. But in stating this they indicate their own doctrine of man: Man is that being which is able to have historical change. Every historical change presupposes **one** thing: a being which **has** history. Neither animals nor angels have history. Therefore we must say that **those** characteristics constitute man's permanent nature which make his historical variations and transformations possible. Against this it could be said that "in some way" nature also has history. But it has history just "in some way," namely, in a different way from the way of man. And the way of man is **so** different, that it is only a confusion to use the same word "history" for man and nature. The difference is obvious: Man not only has history but he also knows

that he has history. And this knowledge gives that quality to his history, which makes it **real** history, namely, events in which freedom and decisions are effective. Only he who can know that he has history, has history in a significant sense of the word. This is the reason for the double meaning of the word history: It designates the event and the record at the same time. Genuine history is recorded history.

In knowing history man is above history, although, on the other hand, he is in history. This structure accompanies every historical situation. It is always present, for it is the permanent condition of man's historical existence. The structure which enables man to transcend any given reality and to reproduce himself in innumerable varieties and transformations, this structure is omnipresent in all these changes. And since it is omnipresent it is knowable. There is, of course, always the danger, the tragically inescapable danger, that we see the permanent structure through the broken glass of our historical finitude. But in this respect the doctrine of man shares the fate of all human activities: They cannot escape finitude, error, and tragedy.

The analysis of man, having and knowing history, leads to a structure of man's being for which I want to use a more abbreviating than explanatory phrase, in which a great number of ideas and observations are summed up: **The structure of man is the structure of "finite freedom."** It is wrong to say that man has finite freedom; this would presuppose another definition of man's being. Man is finite freedom. This is his structure. And everything human is included in this structure, all his relations to man, world, and God. Man is not infinite freedom as we say God is. Nor

is he finite necessity as we say nature is. Man in freedom, but freedom in unity with finitude. The whole doctrine of man is a description of such an astonishing and unique structure as that of finite freedom.

Several years ago (in Keuka) I have tried to develop a doctrine of man, centered around the concepts of freedom and finiteness, without using the term "finite freedom." I was reluctant to do this once more in the same group, and so I suggested the title of this paper. It is an attempt to relate the doctrine of man as finite freedom to the immensely actual problems of the coming social order. This, of course, involves many references to the picture of man indicated in the words "finite freedom," it changes and emends former interpretations of finite freedom, and it shows its practical significance for the political decisions which are at hand.

Religious Socialism wants to give criteria for the construction of the future society. Its ultimate criterion is the nature of man; and therefore the basic structure of man's being: finite freedom. With this presupposition in mind we are now approaching the three realms of problems in which the doctrine of man is decisive for social reconstruction.

II. The question of the historical distortion and perfection of human nature

The story of the rise of Religious Socialism in Germany gives implicitly an introduction into the problems of Utopianism. In Germany, after the first world war there was a deep gap between the revolutionary masses of the workers and the predominantly Lutheran churches. The socialists lived in a horizontal line, believing in the future and feeling the evil present as a preliminary stage which will be overcome by

reform or by revolution. German churches lived in a vertical line, not believing that any future will be essentially better than the present and feeling that the evils of the present, especially the social evils, are a permanent destiny of sinful mankind. Religious Socialism tried to bridge this gap which had tremendous consequences for recent German history. It was a way into unknown land, and it demanded a new interpretation of history and even more urgently, a new doctrine of man. Although the situation in this country is different the problem put before American theological and philosophical thought is so similar, that a type of Religious (Christian) Socialism has developed in the United States which is deeply influenced by the German type. In difference from Germany, American Protestantism has cultivated within itself strong elements of moral and social Utopianism and is partly responsible for the attitude of resignation and cynicism which naturally followed the profound disappointment, the unavoidable consequent of every utopian belief.

The question of utopianism, i.e., the question of the distortion and perfection of human nature, must be answered in the light of a doctrine of man in which human freedom and human finiteness are understood as the two poles in the structure of man's being.

Freedom is the possibility of transcending a given situation. Man is free, for instance, from history in so far as he knows history, thus transcending the immediate temporal process by which he is driven from the past to the future. Man is free from his own necessity in so far as he knows it and is, in this respect, not in it. In knowing, the given man produces something new beyond the given; he does this continuously. He is never

identical with a given situation, he is the essentially unsatisfied being. Producing something new in a creative act. It is a new beginning or, as Nietzsche has called the child, "A wheel rolling by itself." Creation, as producing something new, has infinite consequences. It changes the whole of things. It transforms the face of the cosmos. The traces of our life days cannot be lost in eternity, as Goethe's "Faust" says. The freedom of creativity or of transcending the given is infinite in its implications. But man is finite. And if that which is finite acts in an infinite way it becomes **tragic**. The tragic is the finite, exercising an infinite freedom. This is the reason why God, in the paradise story, forbids man to gain the knowledge of the "powers," the useful ones and the dangerous ones. Man is able to make this step towards knowledge. He is free, he can actualize his freedom and become creative. He can change the cosmos of created nature and continue the divine creativity, becoming "like God" in this respect. The serpent did **not** lie! But the serpent did not say that finite creativity includes tragedy. The finite actions of man cannot stand their infinite consequences. We **must** decide, but in order to decide rightly we must know the infinite meaning of every finite decision and we must not only know it, we must also be in harmony with it. So God says what the serpent concealed: That the actualization of finite freedom means tragedy, the curse over man and his world.

Finite freedom as the structure of man's being excludes all kinds of Utopianism, revolutionary as well as progressivistic, because finite freedom includes tragedy. The tragic includes the two elements of the guilty and the inescapable: in this the Greek tragedians and the Augustinian doctrine of man

agreed. They never denied that man is free; but they asserted that man's freedom is united with tragic necessity, because it is finite. They rejected the doctrines of the rationalists and magicians of their time, that finitude can disappear by progress or revolution or ecstasy. They rejected the alliance of mystics and rationalists which we find again and again in church history.

But the doctrine of finite freedom shows also the way to action. Every act of freedom is finite but as a creative act it also has infinite significance. It has although finite and tragic the full weight of the participation in divine creativity. This feeling alone can overcome the trend towards resignation and cynicism which is the shadow of Utopianism. Christians and Marxists agree in the idea of an intermediary period between now and the ultimate fulfilment. The Christians call it the period between the first and the second coming of Christ, the Marxists the period between the revolution and the disappearance of the state. But actually the transition soon becomes fixed and prevented from change by interests vested in it. Then a new revolution follows producing a new "transition." History is a series of transitions, and whatever we do we are working for a transition. The perfect never appears. This basic idea of Religious Socialism has been—and still is—seriously attacked from a revolutionary point of view. It is said that such a broken belief cannot create the impulse which is needed for all great things. Revolutions, religious as well as secular, speak of the imminent coming of the fulfilment thus producing a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and unrestricted devotion. Is it humanly possible to act without such utopian beliefs? It is possible only if we learn to realize the infinite meaning of a finite act

may have. If this is experienced the transitory character of whatever we achieve does not prevent it from being the only vehicle of an infinite meaning. For such an infinite meaning is lacking if we do **not** act; and this act of not acting is not less but more tragic in its consequences than the creative venturing, even if it is frustrated.

We could not act, however, in this sober and, at the same time, radical way, if we expected to participate in the external achievements of our actions. No dying soldier or revolutionary fighter could sacrifice himself for a future from which he is excluded, if he did not identify his finite existence with the infinity in which he participates by his finite act of self-sacrifice. It is a profound mystery that so many people made this sacrifice without any belief in a personal immortality. Man is able to act without Utopianism because he is able to realize the infinite meaning of a creative act to which he gives his finite existence. This is the greatest expression of his freedom. He transcends his own givenness and, consequently, everything which is given to him. This is the defense of Religious Socialism against the challenge that it breaks the active enthusiasm by fighting against Utopianism.

III. The question of man's creative freedom within society.

Social groups are not organic or personal beings. They are personalized by analogy, but this analogy is not only vague but also dangerous, because it hides the power structure of every social group and asks for free decisions of a group which can be asked only of those who act for the group. This refers to the most collectivistic groups as much as to liberal ones. Every group consists of individuals. Of course, the existence of

these individuals can have more the character of we-existence or more of ego-existence. And certainly, the we-existence is earlier, although not higher, the ego-existence is the result of necessary and extremely significant moral and tragic catastrophes. But whether the one or the other type is predominant, it is always the individual person who decides and acts and not a mythological collective which is dressed up as a person.

Every society of human beings presupposes the basic structure of man and consequently his creative freedom. Creative freedom can express itself in all utterances of man's life, in personal relations, in relations to himself, in pleasure, in work. If in a society the creative freedom is fully used according to the inclination and ability of every individual, freedom in the basic "anthropological" sense is realized. Politics can be one of the realms in which individuals actualize creative freedom. But the question is: Is political freedom in the sense of participation in political creativity necessary for everybody? And do the restriction of civil liberties guaranteeing this participation contradict man's nature as the embodiment of finite freedom?

An historical survey shows that civil liberties in the modern sense of the word were lacking or extremely restricted by far in the greatest part of human history in past and present. The great Asiatic cultures had no concept of a universal participation in political decisions. Their doctrines of man did not include the essentiality of political activities; on the contrary, in many instances they pointed to the opposite. Christianity, although emphasizing the infinite value of every individual, did neither in its early nor in its medieval development demand the participation of every member of the

Church in political creativity. Neither slavery nor serfdom seemed to exclude full humanity in the sense of the "glorious freedom of the children of God." Early Protestantism did not change this attitude, neither in Luther, nor in Calvin. Both of them stressed the duty of civil obedience more than the scholastics had done.

Another stream of thought originated in Greece. Only the free citizen is a free man. Women, children, slaves are not men in the full sense of the word, and consequently, cannot be members of the city assembly (ekklesia—church) in which the political decisions are made. According to Aristotle only the free man, he who participates in politics, is able to reach the highest form of human existence, the theoretical or intuitive life. When the Greek philosophers became Roman slaves, this attitude could not be maintained. The life of theory or mystical intuition is open to people under any social condition. The philosophical slave can reach full humanity—as later on the Christian slave. When the Stoic emperors enlarged the group of those who can receive Roman citizenship they followed their doctrine of the natural rights of man. But they did not include the right of political activity for everybody.

Modern democracies made this step beyond their Stoic predecessors. But they made it very cautiously, excluding women, youth, people without landed property, without a certain income, from active participation in politics. And when these restrictions were removed the party machines and the bureaucracies arose to such a power that the political influence of the average citizen was again reduced to a few decisions, prepared by the hidden or manifest rulers. This situation

will become obvious, the more centralized planning and the centralized use of the large scale means of public communication become necessary.

If participation in political decisions is demanded in the name of man's essential nature, this demand must be understood in a way which is not identical with the present so called "democratic procedures." They are an attempt—partly successful, partly unsuccessful—to institutionalize the genuine demand for political self-determination, implied in man's essential freedom. This freedom demands the participation of every individual in "historical self-determination." Historical self-determination is the activity of man by which he influences the conditions of his creative activity. This has been done in innumerable forms at all times and on all spaces: in the workshop, the guild, and the professional union, in the village administration and the larger regional bodies, in the clan and the big family-councils, in the "soviets" and "cells," in the peasant-collectives, in the secret associations and revolutionary movements. It must be stated that the participation in these forms of historical self-determination gave the average individual often more political influence and occasion to political creativity than the technical participation in the voting machinery of the mass-democracies. From this it follows that, anthropologically speaking, historical self-determination is based on man's essential nature and that its negation necessarily leads to dehumanization, namely, destruction of the structure of creative freedom; but that special forms by which historical self-determination is guaranteed are dependent on the historical situation and that the over-emphasis on a special democratic procedure may spell the doom of democracy

and of historical self-determination—as the example of the German Republic has proved.

Man's nature, namely, the structure of creative freedom, includes one basic equality: The equal claim to be acknowledged as person, namely, as individual embodiment of creative freedom with all the consequences derived from it, above all the equal right of everybody to actualize his creativity, although in the limits of his finitude which are different for each individual; and the equality before the law to which the individual is subjected and which, as a positive law, is different according to the different historical conditions of the different law-creating groups. But no difference in positive law changes the natural equality which underlies every law, man's dignity as person or as the embodiment of finite freedom. This is the ultimate criterion of justice. Justice as the principle of social equality does not demand equality in political or economic power. It does not demand the chance for everybody to get everywhere. Any absolute egalitarianism is denied by the element of finitude in human nature which is expressed in the accidental character of his existence. But justice demands by natural law, namely, by the "law" or essential structure of human nature, that no accidental difference as age, (sex, race, intelligence, strength, birth, etc.) prevail against man's essential equality. And from this follows for the social reconstruction, as demanded by Religious Socialism, that such inequalities in power, political (Fascism) as well as economic (monopolistic capitalism), and in possibilities (class-determined education) are conquered which have resulted in dehumanization, i.e., the destruction of man's creative freedom. Religious Socialism interprets the pre-

sent catastrophical event as reactions of man's creative freedom against social systems which have brought about this destruction, first by a dehumanizing economic and then by a dehumanizing political inequality.

Freedom implies an element of insecurity. Without it no freedom can be imagined, except the infinite or divine freedom. But man's freedom is finite. Liberalism, the system of political freedom, has demanded and created insecurity in order to guarantee freedom. Without risks no actual freedom, and without insecurity no risk. Liberalism is right in this assumption. And a doctrine of man as the embodiment of finite freedom is "liberal" in this respect. But liberalism has paved the way for another type of insecurity, an insecurity which contradicts man's essential freedom and destroys it in the long run: the insecurity about getting a chance to risk something. This insecurity about being admitted to acts of creative freedom (with the risks implied in them) is the main anthropological problem of our present social situation. Freedom and equality were the purposes or at least slogans of the bourgeois revolution. "Security" has already become the catchword of the present revolutionary transformation of human society. It is not the security of non-action which is demanded but the security of being enabled to act creatively. Not the "brave new world" is demanded, but the security that everybody is admitted to creative insecurity. The lack of such a security is the reason for the overwhelming power of anxiety (Angst) in the souls of our contemporaries. There is essential anxiety implied in finitude and especially in finite freedom. This anxiety cannot be overcome except in a complete unity with the infinite—"beyond tragedy." It is the

anxiety of the finite which acts infinitely significant without controlling the infinite implications of his action. But there is another anxiety, the trait of our time, which is anxious about being admitted to significant activity and always in fear that it will be excluded from it, for instance by the meaninglessness of permanent unemployment. Two levels must be distinguished in present day anxiety: the essential anxiety of finite freedom, the fear of the tragedy of finite freedom; and the accidental anxiety of our present social order, which is rooted in the threat of being prevented from any actualization of finite freedom and of being thrown into the horror of meaninglessness. Religious Socialism does not believe that anxiety and insecurity can be removed from a being which is finite freedom and has historical self-determination. But Religious Socialism **does** believe that the present state of social anxiety and insecurity is a basic threat not only to the freedom and self-determination of the individual but also to the life of the social group.

If the question of the individual within the social group is asked, some distinctions in the concept of individuality should be made before any answer is given. There are three different concepts of individuality which usually are confused with each other when "individualism" is attacked or defended. The **religious** concept of the individual, emphasizing the infinite significance of every single bearer of finite freedom; the **cultural** concept of the individual, emphasizing the uniqueness of every single bearer of creative freedom; the **rational** concept of the individual, emphasizing the equality of every single bearer of free decisions, with every other one. These three concepts are not exclusive, and each of them is an immed-

iate consequence of the doctrine of man as the embodiment of finite freedom. But it is possible to emphasize the one over against the other, and all of them are open to distortion. This distortion becomes unavoidable when the essential interdependence between individuality and community is neglected. Then the religious concept of individuality is distorted into the eternal **metaphysical loneliness** of the doctrine of double predestination (which by no means can be reconciled with the experience of the interdependence of guilt and grace). And the cultural concept of individuality is distorted into the self-fulfilling **humanist personality** which tries to become the embodiment of all creative values and actually loses all values by an "aristocratic" detachment from the concrete demands of the community. And the rational concept of individuality is distorted into the **atomistic separation** of every rational nomade from the other one whereby only common interests may produce a kind of preliminary cooperation.

Religious Socialism fights against these distortions which became the main sources of social and personal disintegration in the later stages of bourgeois development. In its earlier stages strong social forces prevented the individualistic disintegration of society, medieval remnants in Europe counteracting the dangers of cultural individualism; new forms of common sense-conformism in the Anglo-Saxon countries, counteracting the dangers of rational individualism. When these dangers became obvious and social disintegration imperiled a large group of nations, strong anti-individualistic movements started and reduced, when successful, the creative freedom of most individuals to a minimum. Dehumanization was used as a means to stop

dehumanization: the "Fascist" way. The problem put before Religious Socialism and its doctrine of man by these developments is: Can a new type of individualism, i.e., affirmation of creative freedom —arises which is naturally integrated in the coming form of a more collectivistic society? Will, for instance, the kind of work cooperation which has appeared in Russia, and, under the impulse of the war, in Great Britain, be able to produce a fourth type of individuality which by its very nature is less open to individualistic distortion than the other types, at least for a long period to come? Is a new type of individual creativity, different from both the cultural one and the rational one (though based on the religious one) in the making, perhaps to be called "work individuality"? It is already possible to meet people who have developed this pattern in their character structure and who may be the model of a more collectivistic future.

IV. The spiritual and the material forces in man's historical existence.

Which are the forces to bring about the new stage of history envisaged by Religious Socialism and subjected to its criteria? This question is as much as the three other main questions dependent on an interpretation of human nature. Finite freedom is freedom on the basis of necessity. This is the presupposition of any meaningful solution of the problem of historical dialectics. Freedom is able to create only in unity with the necessity in which it is rooted. Human freedom is finite, dependent on the concrete accidental situation, its "trends" or "structural necessities." Of course, structural necessity is not mechanical necessity. There is only a limited space for mechanisms in history: spontaneity and freedom are effective in every his-

torical event. But denying mechanical necessity is not denying structural necessity, i.e., trends, tendencies, chances which determine the limits between which freedom may act. Historical dialectics is the attempt to describe such structural necessities and to derive from their analysis the general directions for action. Historical dialectics in this sense continues the prophetic interpretation of the "signs of the times" which itself is in the line of the ancient art of oracles (which in its non-commercialized, genuine form was a unity of political and moral demand.) Religious Socialism has gained a new understanding of this meaning of historical dialectics which has been lost in Christianity as well as in Marxism. Christianity in its moralistic transformation has suppressed the consequences of the classical Christian doctrine of man and its emphasis on the bondage of the will-finiteness, tragedy, and structural necessity in personal and social life. Instead of that it has accepted the idealistic principle: You can what you will. The "men of good will" are the forces which will bring about the next and nearly perfect stage of history. In opposition to this "idealistic" freedom without finitude a depraved historical "materialism" pronounced a finitude without freedom. It considered the historical process as a calculable mechanism so that the future can be expected without any radical action. Its coming is necessary, and nothing can be done about it. Neither can those who dislike its coming prevent it, nor can those who like its coming speed it. Calculation replaces action. This was the doctrine which spelled the doom of the German Social democracy. The psychological attitude corresponding with this understanding of historical dialectics is a union of waiting and acting. The symbolic

expression of this attitude is the New Testament announcement that the Kingdom of God is "at hand." "At hand" means near, not yet present and no more in an indefinite future. It demands acting and waiting at the same time. This is the attitude of every wise psychotherapist who has to wait for the right moment as if no acting were possible and to act as if every moment were the right one. Historical and personal dialectics demand the same attitude which is based on human nature, namely, the structure of finite freedom, the key to the problem of "dialectical processes."

It is also the key to the question of the "favoured place" for historical understanding and action. From the doctrine of finite freedom follows immediately that the place of the mere observer is not the favoured place for analyzing and transforming history. The observer may see many facts, but he cannot "understand" them because he is not within the realm of decisions in which the facts receive their "existential" meaning. He tries to trespass human finiteness by gaining a stand above our historical existence; but in doing so he loses the meaning of history. This is the attitude of a large group of social scientists who try to determine history from the point of view of the observer and who, actually, become the tools of undiscovered and unaccepted social forces. Equally removed from the favoured place of historical understanding and acting are the mere activists, those who always decide, but without freedom from the finite demands of the daily changing situation. They are within the situation and its finitude. But they have sacrificed their freedom. They act and act and never stop. They become mechanized in terms of stimulus and response without the creative intermission, in which new

possibilities appear and the necessity of a given situation is transcended. This is the attitude of the political "practician" who knows how to handle any given situation but who knows nothing about the meaning and the limits of this situation. While the "observer" cannot determine history because he is detached from it, the "activist" cannot determine history because he is enslaved by it. The former neglects the finitude, the latter the freedom of man's historical existence. The "prophetic" spirit transcends history within history, united finiteness with freedom.

This spirit can appear only where the self-secluding finitude of man's existence is liberated by internal or external events of a catastrophic character. The favoured place for historical understanding and acting is "broken finitude," namely, a finitude which is opened for the infinite by suffering. Every finite reality, by tragic necessity, tries to elevate itself to infinite significance. As long as this is attempted the finite creates an "ideology" by which it rationalizes its own given finitude and all its limitations and distortions. This "escape from freedom" (Fromm), namely, from the freedom of self-transcendence, makes creative knowledge and action completely impossible. The "ideological lie"—just because it is not a conscious lie—keeps the truth about our personal and historical existence in darkness. Men, individuals as well as social groups, would not tolerate its discovery. The favoured place of historical understanding and acting, therefore, is the place where ideology and rationalization have become impossible, where finiteness is broken in its claim to maintain itself, where necessity is opened for creative freedom. In this sense the Greek tragedy was a religious way of destroying human ideologies.

The tragic event breaks the unconscious pride of a finite being. In the great prophets it is the punished and ruined nation which is elected as the bearer of future history. Its nationalistic ideologies are broken. In the message of Christ it is the poor, the meek, the sorrowful and persecuted who are favoured for recognizing and entering the Kingdom of God. In Marx's vision of the present world it is the proletariat which has the favoured place for truth and action because it is at the edge of complete dehumanization, where no more ideology is possible. Religious Socialism also asks the question of the "favoured place" or of the "liberated finitude" without being able to identify it with a special sociological group. Religious Socialism is inclined to believe that "broken" people in all groups are the "favoured place" in our present historical situation.

Finiteness is a meaningful concept only in its polar relation to infinity. In defining man by the structure of finite freedom we have defined him religiously by implication. It is not our intention to make this implication explicit. Sometimes this must be done; sometimes it is more adequate to point indirectly to the religious foundation of a doctrine of man and history. Nevertheless, in every statement of this paper the religious background was transparent—at least for those who know the connotations of words like freedom and finitude. The man whose structure is finite freedom is the man who by its very nature inescapably is related to the infinite. This last assertion is the first one in significance for Religious Socialism.

* * *

This paper was presented by Dr. Tillich in the Philosophy Group at the Week of Work, of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CREATIVE CONFLICT

By WILLIAM CLARK

The Christian Church abhors today that which is the very dynamo of its life. Regretting its denominations, frustrated by the rift which separates pacifist from war supporter, it seeks escape from all serious division. Some of its members long for a solution of its differences in terms of an omnibus arrangement called a united Christendom. Others demand that all who would be true must be one—with them. A great unity is the common desire. Yet disunity is the Church's true health. That is, it can be health when welcomed rather than abhorred.

The Church lives and grows in large part according to the creativity of its internal disagreements. A very simple description of the Church defines it as holy and catholic. Essentially the church is holy because it is not an invention of man but a purpose of God, historically established in the event of the Incarnation. It is intended to be a continuation of that Incarnation, the Body of Christ, composed of many members with diversities of gifts but the same Spirit and Lord and God. Therefore in essence it is also catholic, one world church, whose mission is to all humanity and whose fellowship knows no boundaries. But the Protestant mind should recognize two realities which cause secondary but very present complications in this picture. Both finitude and sin must be noted, felt, and dealt with according to the requirements of their inescapable character. The result is a perhaps startlingly modi-

fied understanding which rejects all desire for visible church unity and goes forward constructively with the vital interplay of variation.

Of course there will be many who will not in the least be startled. To them much of my thesis is superfluous; they have been to Edinburgh, Oxford, Madras, in body or in spirit, and have said already in deeply moving ways the best of what I am trying to outline and underline. Yet as I read Christian journals and attend Christian conferences and meet Christian people, I am forced to the conclusion that the profound insights of the giants of the ecumenical movement have not diffused throughout the rank and file.

In one tragic regard this is glaringly evident just at present. Last year the major denominations set forth their statements on the war. These were followed some months later by the declaration of the Federal Council at its Cleveland meeting. But whereas the denominational statements took high ground, saying with no uncertain voice some of the great Christian truths for a torn world, and acknowledging with underlying unity a conscientious divergence on the war issue, the Federal Council called with a very uncertain voice for a ambiguous Christianity in wartime. What took place in the months between the meetings carries the clue to that deterioration. I saw it happen in one denomination. Our declaration was challengingly Christian, and yet at the point of war

support honestly dual. To me it seemed almost splendid. But our denomination as a whole seems to have become ashamed of it. Why? Because it was not ambiguous on the one hand, or because it was not a clearcut war statement on the other. We Christians want to find ways of saying things about the church which are broad enough to make everybody happy, or which proclaim one opinion with absoluteness. Not even the Federal Council has remembered what the ecumenical conferences taught about the creative differences which make up our fellowship in Christ, about our unity which is in the Spirit but not in the flesh.

I. Finitude

The attempt to unite all Christians under one "flag," whether the basis be credal, ecclesiastical, or functional, whether exclusive or inclusive, presumes a static history, the end and meaning of which is capable of embodiment fully and finally in some humanly conceived scheme. It is the error of totalitarianism.

This attempt, whatever the principles of union and however much liberty is permitted within their bounds, becomes in the end that very denominationalism which it may wish to overcome, the essence of which is to absolutize relative ideals. The bad aspect of denominations and parties is not that they exist, but that men idealize them. Ideals so cherished cease to be creative. They have either to compete with other absolutized ideals, ultimately destroying them or being destroyed, or loftily to withdraw from competition, ultimately stagnating.

History shows a tendency of all men and societies in this direction. But such a tendency is taken into account and overcome in that understanding of history which, aware of the necessity of

striving to realize contemporaneously valid ideals, at the same time recognizes the relativity of all human ideals, and the process of obsolescence which they may be subject. Accepting men as, among other things, varied and finite creatures of their day, it does not vainly seek their unification into an all-embracing United Sect. To face the reality and the implications of the variety and relativity of personal life, at whatever cost to Organizational Efficiency and Social Effectiveness, is to take a step toward a really united Christendom.

II Sin

The problem is not solved by the recognition of finitude alone, however. It is not man's relativity but his sin which makes him absolutize his relative ideals, subconsciously putting himself, disguised as His Ideal, into the center of the picture. He thereby denies the fundamental relationship which fashions history, that between God and man, Creator and creature. His unacknowledged assumption is that God can be finitized, that He can be comprehended and contained in human schemes of thought. It seems to me that when anyone declares that the Kingdom of God is certainly thus and so, or that such and such beyond question comprise the irreducible minima of Christian beliefs or practices, he is at that moment dethroning God, plucking Him out of the eternal invisible into the visible temporal. The emphasis here is on the "certainly" and the "beyond question." If God is, as I believe, the transcendent, eternal, personal Father of men and the Normator of their lives (my own idol, if you will; but at least a comprehending rather than a comprehensible one), no finite plan, no set of ideas or activities, is beyond question His. In other words, any kind of

orthodoxy delimited by man to apply to all men is sinful. Not man, but God is the Maker of Norms. Just because He is personal, transcendent, and holy, and men are both finite and fallible, it is to be expected that we shall differ in our interpretation of what is His word to us and for all men. In part our differences will be natural and acceptable, resulting from the finite character of personality; in part they will be caused by sin, by no means acceptable but inescapable.

Life is personal—that is, it is an ever-developing discovery of what God is now saying to men, to individual men according to their individual spiritual time-schedules. What God may say is **something that we do not already or fully understand**. It is not clear; we cannot be sure. Christianity contains the most radical skepticism; but it also overcomes it in personal faith. **We are called to be great enough not to know, but to believe, and eagerly and carefully to try.**

Our faith is more valid the more it is in God and the less in some definitive external authority we have set up. It is more daring, more evangelistic, and less encumbered. It is more on the offensive, freed from the delays and pitfalls of self-defense in the name of Defending the Faith. It is **really confident in God**, knowing that He is actually guiding men in all sorts of ways today, and He and He alone may be trusted to guide them well. God alone can unite men who are separated from one another both by their natural variety and by their sin. The objective, normative, uniting power in His, and it will act among us when our humility as regards our beliefs in real and our trust is truly not in ourselves but in Him.

At this point the objections which have been clamoring for a hearing must be respected. Utter skepticism! Stark

individualism! And what else? To meet these objections I propose, first, simply to press my contention harder. One way of thinking of the matter is by analogies. Our progress in vital life is by beat and counter-beat through a resistant medium. To fly, the eagle no less than the sparrow must pulsate his wings through the resisting air; to swim, the fish his fins through the resisting water. Or say that Christians are sailors, heading into the wind. They cannot make weight at all except for the winds of God; yet they must forever tack, following now this angular course, now that, always at any given moment partly approaching but partly also going away from harbor. Thus the story of even the most devout saint is no tale of direct and easy advance to the goal. If movement for any length of time is direct and easy for you, you may be sure of one thing—it is away from God. That is the only kind of straight line which can ever be drawn between man and God, the one with the arrow pointing away from God. *Facilis descensus* **Averni.**

An author by the name of Kafka wrote a symbolic novel called *The Castle*. In it the heart's desire of the main characters was admission inside the walls of a certain castle. Many messengers came from the castle gates with instructions for them; but some were fake, some were lost, some misinterpreted, and others in transmission, garbled beyond understanding. Our poor people never quite were able to fulfil the proper preconditions, they never quite knew what to do. Yet that there was an ultimate intention for them to be in the castle they never doubted. And of striving they never wearied.

In a rather nightmarish and repulsive way this story says half of that truth, the

other half of which is so beautifully recorded in the quotation made famous by King George which goes something like this: "I said to a man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may go forth on my way.' He said, 'Go out into the dark and put your hand into the hand of God. That will be to you better than a light, and safer than a known way.'" There is indeed divine leadership for us along our dark, adventurous path, and we may well hope to arrive home at the last. But let us be none too certain at any moment that our steps are homeward, for the road is devious, and it is easy to mistake the guiding pressures on our hand.

Or let me say it baldly. Our experience of God is always greater and more complex than even our most magnificent formulations of it. Revelation ever bursts the bonds of articulation.

Utter skepticism? A dangerous distrust of doctrine, indeed of thought itself? No. I say this is rather to go beyond skepticism and give thought and doctrine their proper, contingent value. Valueless, never; but final? By no means. Useful as a necessary tool of communication, but always only a tool. Disassociate yourselves from your opinions and convictions, you individuals, you group members. Never bear witness to them. But everlastingly bear witness **through** them to the saving reality which gave them rise. "We proclaim not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." "Who is Paul and who Apollos? Paul planted, Apollos watered; but Christ gives the increase." If history bears clear testimony to anything it is that even the best thoughts of men are incomplete, even their surest are often the worst, and all of them lag behind the living truth, the personal truth, the

specific truth. At the moment of formation, God begins to slip out into a new process of communication.

To recognize this is to live under the Spirit, in that adventure which makes all things new, with infinite possibilities along every step of the way. This is what makes "the Christian man the most free lord of all, and servant to nobody," free from the legalism of a definite and absolute and unquestionable body of principles, free from the heresy of a rational and consistent and clearly bounded body of doctrine.

At the same time, this is the greatest responsibility of all, which makes "the Christian man the most humble servant of all and subject to everybody," because his responsibility is ultimately to the Lord of the universe rather than to his own chosen opinion or party. He will do his opinion or party the most good by not closing the door against any of the rest. He will be prepared to be instrumental in timely change as readily as in timely conservation, without being committed to one type of attitude or the other.

And does this leave the possibility wide open to the most heterogeneous and undirected sort of history? No, God's history is not capricious. His hand is in it, and his pattern is working out. Trust Him; but distrust your own assurances concerning the delineation of that pattern.

Stark individualism? "An ultimate expression of that sinful pride which attempts to life the sinner out of history and out of permanent corporate relationships in his dealings with God?" A very real danger, but I think the answer still is No. Indeed if fully accepted my contention leads to the frankest acknowledgment of the necessity of corporate life. By both our individual partialness and our sinfulness we are drawn together, to

pool our intimations of eternal verity, to participate, with a deep concern for the victory of truth, in the struggle, the action and reaction, the development, the mutual forgiveness, the worship which leads to the blended mind of a Christian group. This is the most corporate experience in the world, and perhaps the finest.¹ But remember, even the group's best work, that which seems closest to the very mind of God, is still a thing comparative and finite, subject to the change and decay which we see in all around. No man's span, no church's span can gain the final check of the eternal years. All remains yet tentative.

In the last analysis the only hope both for certainty and for community lies in men's profound realization of their sin and in the intense sense of their various yet common missions in life. The men upon whom depends the realistic advance toward a world Christian community are the humble men who will witness fearlessly but open-mindedly to their faith. The humble men are those who actually have been humbled, from whom has been wrenched the cry, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? God will! Thanks be to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord!" They stand on no self-wrought security, but on the grace of God.

III. The Multiform Church

Finally, then, we find that if what has been said indicates accurately the only valid basic understanding for movement

1. Many Christians have never had this experience, yet it is man meeting his creaturely situation with the highest fulfilment of the Creator's apparent intention. I have been asked where it may be met. I have met it in some Ashram-like Christian groups such as the Newark Christian Colony, in missionary groups, in some church fellowships, in the Cooperative Movement, among the Society of Friends, and in the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

toward an ecumenical Church fellowship which is really speaking, along with various words of its own, God's words to its generation, then a modified view of the Church is implied. It is not a unity inside which are the orthodox and outside which the heretical and heathen. No man knows exactly who is in the Church and who outside, because the criterion is not man's but God's. The Christian fellowship is not a unity; it is a community. It is a creative fellowship of conflict, the only really creative one, because it alone recognizes the personal nature of the relationships of men to the Eternal Personal and hence to each other.

The church is not a static fellowship, able to state its basis of unity rationally and definitively. This would be to disregard men's deep-lying tendency to sin and their finite personal diversities. Rather it is a dynamic, disunited fellowship, composed of smaller, more united fellowships which find their growth and vitality through mutual repentance, constructive disagreement, and cooperation. The church is unable ever to state its own nature for good and all, yet it is equally unable ever to cease from trying to proclaim and to fulfil its differing missions to its age, being founded on the recognition that sin and finitude do not prevent the God of love from using repentant men, just as they are, to incarnate His various will in history. It is the community of the repentant missionaries, separated into sects by their hybrid conscience, but fundamentally united by God's spirit.

All other societies tend finally to illustrate the thesis that groups are demoralizing. They furnish a noble guise for ego-worship, which finds to its satisfaction a very definite embodiment of its self-ideal in its Group Creed, or Way, or Leader, and a very definite embodi-

ment of the Enemy, as in Fascism and Communism and all too often in religious sects and massed opinions. Hence are derived powerful Causes whose adherents will experience a moving kind of integration and community, which, to the degree to which the Imperialism and Defense of its ideal is extended, will wreck havoc with God's family. God forgive us, we have all fallen prey many times to this subtle satanism.

The point will bear illustration. It is so seldom realized that what we encourage under the name of loyalty is often sin in a very clever disguise. Studying a few years ago in the British Isles, my wife and I rather frequently encountered an attitude of condescension toward America as a shallow, undisciplined, immature country of noisy barbarians. Without fail, our immediate reaction in each case was retaliation in kind, accompanied by resentment and a mounting blood pressure—usually caught and controlled before an international incident developed, thank God! There we were, two Christians who supposedly had understood what humility should mean, so tied up with our country in the deep places of our being that the moment she was criticized we rallied to her defense most loyally—because she was **ours**. Not because and insofar as she was good. Just because she belonged to us. In the attack on her we felt our own expanded personalities under fire, and for that sole reason reacted in such heathenish fashion. I put it to you that in some degree you often have the same experience when anything you have made your own is in jeopardy,, whether an opinion or a party or a country. When it is something which very directly and obviously has to do with your own person or character, you will readily acknowledge that your response is sinful. When it con-

cerns, rather, some chosen party or group, recognition of sin is much more difficult, and the wrong attitude confidently masquerades as right.

The church, however, is not only thus. It evidences this tendency, but repeatedly overcomes it. It strips the masks from our faces and shows us what idolatrous and limited creatures we are. Then it presents the cross.¹ There alone is a ground for community which knows no barriers to its fellowship or its mission. It recognizes all men to be finite sinners, **including Christians**. That is the paradoxical essence of the Church of God. It is at once the **Body of Christ**, (sharing his sufferings in order to share his glory), and the **Hypocrite**, the **Crucifier of Christ**.

It is the fellowship of those who have been delivered not from sin but from unconscious bondage to sin or willingness to sin. The cross on Golgotha was an end, yes; but it was a beginning, too. It is for us, today, human as we all are and standing in the need of its redemption.

It is for us; and it is for us to take. As of old, in another situation and civilization, the Word was made flesh, contemporaneous, historical, so now we are called in spite of ourselves to continue that Incarnation in our situation and civilization. We must bear the cross in our time—and it will be borne for us.

Contemporaneous in this way, the church is not separate from history, an alien observer of the temporal scene. It is God's critic of all past history and His maker of the history of the future **by virtue of its own present encounters amid the life of its day with that reality**

1. Here, of course, I am most plainly, as I have often been intermittently, on the level of special pleading or witness. I speak most unequivocally what I feel most convincingly. Yet even here I bring against myself the basic reminder that I may be wrong.

which its followers have always encountered through the ages and which has sent all new, constructive movements along their world-changing way.

* * *

This, then, is the word which I believe Protestantism should say, first, to those who are seeking an inclusive basis of uniformity for all sects and divisions; second, to those who claim and proclaim final, exclusive reality for their own; and third, I would add, to those who are indifferent to the question. If relevant, it will help us to undertake movements toward a united Christendom without doing more harm than good. We shall perhaps—or perhaps not—remain Pacifists, Warriors, Congregationalists, Meth-

odists, Oxford Groupers, Barthians, Left wing Christians, and so on, or perhaps shall become members of groups yet unheard of. But the members of every group, whether it be old or new, will be open-minded and humble about their peculiar grasp of the interpretation of life, yet thoroughly convinced of God's grasp of them and utterly devoted to the realization of His purposes in history. Instead of being obstructionists, they will expect, encourage, and possibly even launch those sects required for our day. But we may hope to be saved from both old and new groups outliving their usefulness and clinging ungraciously to life in a time not theirs, as oak leaves do in winter.



THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

A Statement of the Christian Doctrine of Our
"Vertical" Relation to God

By PAUL RAMSEY

In the book of Deuteronomy is written: "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah; and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." This passage came to the mind of Jesus when a certain lawyer, a Pharisee, tempting him, asked the question: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy . . ." and here Jesus, or Matthew who gives us the record, strikes out the word "might" from the Old Testament verse and replaces it with the word "mind": ". . . and with all thy mind." Luke, who gives a parallel account, does not leave out anything that is found in Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength," but he thereafter also adds, "and with all thy mind." In either case, the significant new statement of Jesus and of the New Testament is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind."

Back in college certain members of our ministerial league used to measure the amount of love they had for the Lord by how low their grades had been the previous semester, by how much they neglected the intellect to take care of "spiritual" things. If the words of Jesus mean anything at all, quite the reverse calculation would have been more in

order. Fifty years ago there was for many men an acute conflict between science and religion, between knowledge and faith, between what they knew to be true and what they wanted or were enjoined to believe. If the words of Jesus mean anything at all, such a conflict ought never to have arisen, at least not from the side of the Christian, though it would still have been possible for some superficial thinker with an immense knowledge of one field and an immense ignorance of all others so to have absolutized and extended his little truths beyond their bounds as to provoke a shadow-warfare with religion, to the troubling of the ordinary minds of ordinary folk. Christianity, however, in its essence knows no conflict between things intellectual and things spiritual. The individual who fails to make maximum use of all his mental powers to the nth degree of their potential development is failing to love God as he should.

The same is true of churches traditions and theological movements within Christianity. None can properly bear the name of Christian and be primordially irrationalistic. Of course, it is inevitable that not everyone in any church, Protestant or Catholic, will think everything out for himself. Large portions of the beliefs and practices of religious devotees everywhere will always remain matters accepted on faith or by custom. Of course, also, persons on the periphery of any given theological move-

ment, or who themselves are in some other school of thought, will doubtless consider this or that in the first to be irrational. But at the heart of every such church tradition or theological movement within Christianity will always be found great minds hard at work, whose books give ample evidence that they value the intellect. This is a significant difference between the New Testament and the Old, between the Christian and the Judaistic traditions. It is a striking fact that throughout history Jews who have given the world great systems of thought have been either apostates from their religion, like Karl Marx; or else purely secular philosophers, like Spinoza, or experts in one branch of science, like Einstein, who imagine, often wrongly, that their religion is singularly divorced from their reasoning. Christianity deliberately brings both together. On Christian grounds there can be neither an attack on reason nor a retreat from reason, neither positive anti-rationalism nor a negative irrationalism. So to debase the mind is to debase man, and to debase man is to debase God who made him and gave him a mind with which to think.

But to debase human reason is one thing; to abase it is another. To think as hard as ever you can is one thing; to claim that reason is autonomous is another. Jesus intended to speak to the whole man when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy mind"; but he was also speaking to the whole man when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind." No clearer statement of an instrumentalistic view of mind was ever uttered! Confronted with the alternative of either making God an instrument for the realization of the deliverances of human reason or a concept to be enclosed within human thought, on the one hand, or, on the other, of mak-

ing human reason itself an instrument, albeit man's great instrument, of responding to God, Christianity has always followed Jesus in choosing the latter. And the reason is that if a man does not love the Lord with all his mind he does not thereby become a pure reason with no loves; he simply loves something else with all his heart, soul, strength, and mind. One's loves are always deeper than his reason; and reason is always in the employment of some love.

In that recent best seller "The Song of Bernadette," there is a chapter in which one cannot read for long without realizing that it has been incorrectly titled. It is a description of the character, Lafite, a rationalist, artist, and writer; and to contrast him with Bernadette, the saint who perhaps loves too naively, the author, Franz Werfel, has entitled this chapter "I Never Loved." Lafite's self-absolutized and unloving reasoning has driven him to the brink of scepticism:

Many decades had passed since he had entered a sanctuary for any other purpose but the appraisal of artistic values. "I am not as these people are," he reflected (as he made his way about the hospital beds of those who awaited miraculous cures), "I haven't their uncomplicated faith. All the corrosive thoughts that have ever been thought have penetrated my brain. My reason stumbles at the head of the human caravan over a darkling land. I know that we are a wretched animal species, distinguished from the insects and amphibians by but a few nerve centers and fallacious syllogisms. Truth is a million times more inaccessible to us than the differential calculus is to a louse."¹

1. Franz Werfel: "The Song of Bernadette." N.Y.: Viking, 1942, p. 548.

Lafite is afflicted with cancer, and this fact accentuates his mood of cynicism. "His own death which lay in ambush in his throat" made him aware of the transient physical base upon which all his rational powers rested; and he knew that soon death would bring to naught both his rational accomplishments and his rational doubts. Yet, as one reads on he is struck by the fact that the contrast here is not between the reason of Lafite and the superstition of those who expected miracles and kissed the dirt where Bernadette tread, but rather between one superstition and another. The contrast is not between one who does not love at all and those who love God in simplicity, but rather between one who loves himself with all his mind and Bernadette's simple devotion of all the poor powers she possessed to God. It is clear that what is meant in description of the unqualified rationalist is not "I never loved" but "I love and have always loved something else with all my capacity." Of this, Lafite himself speaks:

Yes my days are numbered and my nights are heavy upon me. Yet is the fear of death not the worst. One can manage with it. You stretch yourself out and you wait. But in the heavy nights, Clarens, I've come upon a far more ghastly thing. You won't laugh at me, for you've come to believe. Since age has not made me duller but wiser, I've come upon the cognition that I'm the greatest sinner in the whole world, I, Hyacinthe de Lafite, the nameless scribbler, the zero who means nothing to anyone. And don't believe, Clarens, that I'm indulging in Byronic coquetry in this hour. I'm not talking about the thousand sins of slackness and weakness with which my soul is stained day by day. I'm talking about the crucial

sin according to Genesis with which I'm rotten, of that insane, laughable, and most absurd pride which stood at the very cradle of my mind. At ten it had hold of me. I was too proud to be beholden to anyone for anything, even to my dear mother. Out of pride I wanted to be something which is self-productive and hence self-sustaining. The notion of being a sort of grown-up foetus, conditioned by descent, land, speech, blood, metabolism—this notion seemed intolerable to me. Independent to an insane degree, I swore to be the only human being that belonged to no community. According to my conviction nothing had served to educate, influence, or guide me. I was to be the fruit of myself. The self-consciousness of a vain spirit exalted itself above all human thought. If I did not acknowledge the being of God, it was because I could not endure not being He. Therefore the analytical processes became a throne from which I ruled the world. My sin, Clarens, was the sin of Lucifer, even though I'm a dirty nobody and sick unto death. In the heavy nights of the past year I have come to see that our sin harms us far more than it does God. It is evident that my pride has destroyed me.²

One's love is always deeper than his reason. A person who does not employ his mind in the service of God will employ it, however subtly disguised as the service of pure knowledge or of universal humanity, in the service of himself. Because one is not converted to the Lord does not mean that he remains in an unconverted state of pure innocency; rather it means that he is converted to

2. Ibid, pp. 550-51.

himself, even though it be indirectly through some idol of the mind.

In a similar fashion, a person who does not love his neighbor under the aspect of his neighbor's relationship to God will love him under the aspect of his neighbor's relation to himself. He will love him only so far as his neighbor can be found to be of some use to himself. Unless we love other people for Christ's sake, we will not thereby free ourselves to love them for their sake, for, as we say, the "inherent" value of human personality, but rather we will love them for our selves' sake. This is the reason the commandment to love our neighbors comes after, and is always in Christianity understood in the context of, the commandment to love God. No matter how intimate two persons are, unless they live with each other as though under God, one of these selves can rise above the relationship and look down upon it, seeking how best he can profit by it. By reason of our spiritual power of transcending over all forms of human association, we are all to one degree or another self-conscious in our friendships. We approach other selves tentatively, and with fear lest the other person suddenly siezes the advantage in using the relationship between us. Here is a young lady out riding with her boy-friend of the evening; he pulls up on a beach overlooking the lake or on the height overlooking a city somewhere, and, throwing his arm carelessly on the back of the seat, says to her, "Well, tell me about yourself." Does she do so? The answer is both Yes and No. Of course, the development of any friendship or any love depends upon our achieving openness and frankness in our responses to one another. But there is scarcely a person who walks the earth who has not sometime been too quickly and easily

frank, too revealing, too spontaneous in his or her friendship with someone; and thereby has had to learn that, since man has the spiritual power to transcend and make use of any relationship whatever, our approaches to each other must necessarily be tentative, gradual, and somewhat withholding, if we wish to avoid being rebuffed to the heart. Only in the love of God and through trust in Him for our security do we dare to open ourselves enough really to love one of our fellow men.

Contemporary theologians have adopted some words from mathematics to express this universal characteristic of human experience, our potentially perverse use of our minds, our bodies, or other selves unless we use ourselves and them for God, namely, the words "horizontal," "vertical," and, we may add for purposes of explanation, "oblique." A horizontal relationship can best be defined as any relationship in which the self stands which it can transcend, and toward which it can assume an oblique or slanting relation. The sensualist is not one who is straightforwardly physical in his living, but is rather any person who has taken up an oblique relationship to his body, pursuing himself therein. The woman who enjoys being sick is a self who has transcended her disease so as to make it a means of indirectly or obliquely finding comfort for herself. If a doctor were to cure her of her physical trouble, her whole spiritual career would be wrecked. There would be no more lofty patience self-consciously to display, no more floods of sympathy from her friends in which to bathe. She could thereafter express the nobility of her character only by, say, washing dishes, and she is apt to have extreme difficulty making the change, unless she consoles herself by reflecting on how diligently she does her

doleful duty, which is something else again than simply and straightforwardly doing her duty. The rationalist whose whole life is motivated by the "pride of knowledge" has assumed an oblique relationship toward his mental accomplishments, pursuing himself thereon. There is nothing wrong with his being rational, but his spiritual attitude needs to be turned from himself toward God. A lover who enjoys his beloved more when he is alone than when he is with her is one who prefers to contemplate the idea of someone's loving him to having a direct experience of this love; he is, as we say, in love with love, or in love with himself as a lover or as loved, more than he is in love with his beloved. In general, two persons are said to be horizontally related to one another because one of these persons can relate himself obliquely to their friendship, seeking through it to dominate the other. This is the description of that imperialism which characterizes the relationship of men to men everywhere; and which produces in the relationships of groups, of nation to nation, overt and politically established forms of imperialism and war. It is the "pride of power."

A "vertical" relationship, on the other hand, is any such connection in which a person stands which he cannot transcend, nor make a device for his own self-aggrandisement and glorification. God bears such a relation to us. Nevertheless, not all of our relationships to Him are of this character. The depth of the human dilemma is not fully plumbed until it is understood that man can make self-centered use of his religious nature as well as of his mind and of his fellow beings.

The power of what Lafite in "The Song of Bernadette" calls the "self-consciousness of a vain spirit" to "exalt

itself above all human thought" and all mundane human relationships pertains also to all strictly "religious" matters. Pride not only stands "at the very cradle of the mind" and not only infects all human relationships with injustice, but also it stands at the very cradle of the religious life of the individual and of the race generally, infecting it with rebellion against God and with self-righteousness. We may love ourselves even in loving and yearning for God. Be there a man with soul so open to the Divine promptings that he, even while bowing low in worship, has never stood up in the presence of God and said to himself, "Lord, I who am bowing so low, who pray so regularly, and who beseech thee so earnestly and methodically, Lord, thou knowest that I am not as other men are"? In the spiritual life also we are all "Little Jack Horners": we no sooner put in our thumbs and pull out some spiritual plum than we cry, "Oh, what a good boy am I!" Jean Jacques Rousseau began his famous **Confessions** with vigorous effort to relate himself properly to God:

I have shown myself as I was; contemptible and vile when I was so; good, generous, sublime when I was so; I have unveiled my interior such as Thou thyself hast seen it, Eternal Father! Collect about me the innumerable swarm of my fellows; let them hear my confessions; let them groan at my unworthiness; let them blush at my meannesses! Let each of them discover his heart in his turn at the foot of thy throne with the same sincerity; . . .

This sounds like the very acme of Christian humility, until Rousseau adds: ". . . and then let any one of them tell thee if he dares: 'I was a better man!'" Humility, it has been said, is pride turned wrong side out, and worn that way in

order to attract more attention. Whether it be through works of individual moral perfection, or through worship, or through social action that we hope to serve God, one of our selves climbs up on the shoulders of the other self and reaches out a hand to congratulate him. There doubtless are ways from man to God, but the question is: At what God other than oneself has one arrived when he has traversed any one or all of these ways?

Christianity, therefore, since it speaks not just to this or that problem but has an answer to the profoundest problem of human existence, namely, our self-centeredness, is not primarily good advice about how to find and get to God, but good news of how God has come to us. To that muscle-bound soul who hasn't a mystical streak in him, and who sits in church with eyes wide open while the minister tries to go through his most impressive liturgy, the Christian message comes not as good advice on how to become "high church," or how to endure Quaker silences, in ten easy lessons, but as the good news that God is in this place, not needing to be sought, and that ordinarily, though not always, one will want to close his eyes and bow before Him. To the social activist the Christian message comes not primarily with good advice on social planning, but with the good news, which is also bad news to human pretension, that "unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain who build it." To the industrial worker, who neither is a mystic, nor is inclined to make much effort at "practicing the presence of God," nor is in any position to exert widespread social influence, Christianity comes not with good advice about how to influence the peace when you can't, but with the good news that God comes to him in and through the jobs

which his hands find to do now in this economic system and in this political order.

God's relationship to us we cannot escape, though we can introvert any of our ways of relating ourselves to Him. God comes to us in creative activity: this we cannot make our work.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Declare, if thou has understanding.

Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knewest?

Or who stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened?

Or who laid the corner-stone thereof, When all the morning stars sang together,

And all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38: 4-7)

Jehovah hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name: . . . in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me: and he hath made me a polished shaft: in his quiver hath he kept me close . . . (Is. 49: 1, 2)

God comes to us in judgment upon our sin, and as caretaker of our good: this we cannot make our work.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?

Or wither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:

If I make my bed in Shoel, behold thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning

And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me,

And thy right hand shall hold me.

(Ps. 139: 7-10)

More important for the Christian than the question: Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth, or formed thy bones in the womb? or: Where wast thou when the ultimate judgment between right and wrong was made? is the question: Were you there when they crucified my Lord? God comes to us in redeeming activity: this, no more than creation or judgment, can we make our work. We cannot save ourselves any more than we can create ourselves. We are those who have been first loved. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him might not perish" in his sins or in his searching for God. Only in the context of Divinely initiating love, indeed, is the commandment "Thou shalt love" anything but a sheer self-contradiction. Almost anything in the world can follow a "Thou shalt," anything, except love. Love cannot be com-

manded, but it can be called forth. It is the Christian faith that our love has been elicited by God's love in Christ. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind," becomes the announcement, "God loves," and the result for which now we have the courage, "I love my neighbor as myself." In Christianity there is no third commandment "Thou shalt love thyself"; this we do well enough naturally. The whole work of redemption is in the other direction. By establishing a "vertical" relation to us by the grace of His salvation, which we cannot transcend or use but which we can trust, God sustains us in a more straightforward "horizontal" relation to our fellow men, and to a degree overcomes in us our tendency to make ourselves the center of every relationship in which we stand.



OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Paul Tillich is Professor of Philosophical Theology at Union Theological Seminary, and a former leader of the religious socialist movement in Germany. His very important paper published in this issue was first presented to the National Council on Religion in Higher Education.

Paul Ramsey is Professor at Garrett

Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois.

William Clark has just assumed the pastorate of the Baker-Maverick Church in East Boston.

Winnifred Wygal is a Secretary on the National Committee of the Y. W. C. A., and contributing editor of Christianity and Society.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE GROWTH OF AMERICAN THOUGHT, by Merle Curti, Harper Brothers, \$5.00.

Professor Curti has mastered one of the most prodigious tasks ever undertaken by an historian of American thought. He has gone back to primary sources and studied leaflets and pamphlets, sermons and addresses, journals and books of every period of American life in order to give us the full flavor of various periods of American history. The difficulty of such an approach is that it fills the picture with so much detail that the general outline is obscured. The general pattern of the development of our culture is very clear in Professor Curti's mind and it is therefore not quite just to say that the outline is "obsured." Rather the history is somewhat deficient in a consideration of the meaning of the various shifts of emphasis in American thought. This lack ought perhaps not be regarded as a defect; for it is obviously impossible for an historian to perform every historical task in one volume. Professor Curti has chosen to do one job well. He has mastered more primary source material than probably any previous historian of America has attempted.

There are special reasons why this history will prove invaluable to those interested in religious thought. The author gives a full account of the relation of religious life to our culture. He depicts the conflict between the rationalistic enlightenment and evangelical Christianity in the period from Jefferson to Jackson and shows by what power of missionary zeal the enlightenment was overwhelmed

and evangelical Christianity, rather than rationalistic idealism, became the force behind the democratic movement. He traces the conflict between religion and science in our culture; analyses the relation of Christianity to both nationalist and internationalist thought in various periods of our history; probes into the interaction between Christian thought and the shift from optimism to pessimism in our culture; and finally gives a very good account of the "social gospel."

The scholarly zeal of Professor Curti is quite exceptional and it is matched by a profound objectivity and the spirit of fairness in presenting the various strains of American thought. He is not interested in establishing any thesis about the meaning of American development. Though there are disadvantages in such objectivity one must also gratefully record many advantages. One feels, in reading this book that one is being conducted by a very cool and discerning friend, through the mazes of American culture without being distracted by too many personal and tendentious observations from the guide.

R. N.

THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS, Albert C. Knudson, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. \$2.75.

Dean Knudson is a very able and scholarly theologian who until recently presided over one of the greatest of our Methodist theological schools. In reading this exposition of Christian ethics one has the feeling that we have come a long way from John Wesley. Knudson's conception of the Christian life is

strictly "one-dimensional." All the heights and depths of Christian experience are nicely polished off in order to fit Christian ethics into the pattern of philosophical ethics. Dean Knudson declares that "it has been our contention throughout the book that there is no proper antithesis between theological and philosophical ethics." In pursuing this thesis he has developed a Christian ethic which could have been written by Nicolai Hartman or any half dozen philosophers who disavow the Christian faith. It's an ethic of cold and calculating moral prudence in which John Wesley's sense of urgency, his consciousness of sin and his sense of grace, his knowledge of the depths and heights of moral and religious experience are lost. In its place we have a rational analysis of the moral problem in which, as in all rational analyses, the author is terribly concerned to prove that the interests of the self must have equal validity with the interests of the other in every moral decision.

Dean Knudson worries very much about the doctrine of original sin because he has a very simple Pelagian conception of sin and is certain that only an explicit and conscious choice of evil can rightly be called sin. He is nevertheless forced to admit that is a general inclination to evil in all mankind. He explains this tendency as due to two causes. The one is that before moral nature has fully developed in children "pleasure-giving modes of action have already been established" and these "resist the newly awakened moral will." The other cause of evil is social contagion. These evil habits of the child "are strengthened by the example of others." Such a simple example of childish evil as jealousy is not explained by Knudson's explanation. It is something quite different than the inertia of "pleasure-giving modes of ac-

tion" against the newly formed moral will. Dean Knudson thinks the assurance of pardon in Is. 40, 2 assuring Israel "that her iniquity is pardoned, for she has received at the Lord's hand doubled for all her sins" is "not literally true; and that in like manner we frequently confess 'sins that are not sins.'" The confession is merely "a rhetorical method of expressing our dependence upon God."

Even Jesus' parable of the Pharisee and the Publican in which the righteous are reminded of their unrighteousness is blunted. We are told that "Jesus put insistent and what at times seems like an excessive emphasis upon humility and modesty" because he was "confronted in the Pharisaic movement with a type of arrogance which manifested itself even in piety." There is no suggestion that there is a Pharisee in all of us. Ostensibly if Jesus were confronted with the modern generation of Christians he would not be quite as emphatic about the virtue of humility.

The realities and depths of evil in society are dealt with no more profoundly than those which reside in the individual soul. The tragic realities of economic conflict in the modern world, driving our whole civilization to the very brink of disaster are explained as follows: "There is no native selfish spirit in man that necessarily expresses itself in fixed economic laws.—The competitive system of the past has undergone important modifications. Men are learning that 'philanthropy pays.' Oppression on the one hand and rebellion on the other are bad for business. As men come to see this rules of business tend to change. Economic laws respond in a measure to moral laws." One wonders what is particularly moral about the realization that "philanthropy pays."

The heights as well as the depths of the moral life of man are blunted in this treatise. Dean Knudson is terrible concerned to prove that self love and self preservation are ethically respectable and that the interests of the self belong in the field of ethical consideration. The difficulty with his whole discussion of this problem is that he never comes to grips with the basic paradox of Christian ethics that self-realization is the unintended consequence of self-giving but can not be the intended end. Dean Knudson does not like paradox but he can hardly avoid this one: "Whose seeketh to gain his life will lose and whosoever loses his life will find it." Trying to avoid it, he involves himself in all kinds of confusion. We are told that self love must be subordinated to the love of God and retain a place "coordinate with the love of man." The demand for self-renunciation in the New Testament is emasculated to mean something between a hedonistic renunciation of some pleasures for the sake of others and the Buddhist self-renunciation. The Christian ethic requires the surrender of "all purely selfish and evil desires" but does not require the surrender of pleasures derived from "relative and permissible good of life."

The whole nature of the conflict between self-love and love in the human soul is obscured by all these prudential considerations. Dean Knudson is even forced to say that Jesus could not have meant the admonition of non-resistance literally because in that case "it would negate the right of self-defense." He does not say in what, if any, sense Jesus did mean this word.

Since the whole conflict between self-love and love can be worked out rather easily by any prudent moralists who is careful to steer a middle way Dean Knud-

son has little of John Wesley's sense of a religious crisis in which the soul must be shattered to its very depths by God's judgment and be reconstituted by grace. Knudson assures us that in the days when Christians were recruited from Jewish and Pagan homes their acceptance of Christianity involved a "radical change that was properly described as conversion." But children "are now reared in Christian homes and of them no radical change is as a rule to be expected. 'Conversion' in their case is not necessary. Christian nurture properly takes its place." The dissipation of Methodist consciousness could hardly go further than that even if one grants that revivals are not the only way in which the religious crisis out of which a genuine rebirth comes, can be effected.

R. N.

IN SEARCH OF MATURITY by
Fritz Kunkel, Scribners. \$2.75.

I may be mistaken but this seems to me to be the most important psychological book dealing with religion which has been written in decades. The reason is quite simple because it has finally brought the affinities between depth psychology and the Christian interpretation of the human situation fully to light. Despite the conflict between Freudian naturalism and the Christian faith there was even in the Freudian version of the new psychology an understanding of the depths and complexities of man's inner life which corresponded more to the Christian view of the drama of sin and grace than the picture of man drawn by the objective psychologists, who saw little but the surface realities of the human psyche.

Depth psychology has moved from Freud to Jung and Adler, from Jung

to Kunkel; and now in Kunkel's own thought from a distant sympathy with the Christian version of the human situation to a definite avowal of the Christian faith and a further elaboration of his own thought in terms of that faith.

Kunkel understands with Christianity that the human self is not some simple bio-psychological entity which can be placed under the microscope. He sees the infinite dimension in which the self moves. "The self" he declares exists and works in time but can not be located in space.—Its efficacy depends upon glands—the central nervous system—on blood and circulation—yet in spite of all this it acts independently." The organic relation of the self to nature and the indeterminate self-transcendence of the self are equally understood.

The concretion which results from the self's premature centering of the self within itself is called "ego" by Kunkel and the "ego" is defined as the self's sham center. In dealing with the whole process of drawing the self out of itself Kunkel develops a theory sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously derived from or running parallel to the Christian doctrine of grace. This is to say that he understands that redemption from egocentricity is not a matter of willing to be good. The shattering of the narrow self and its recreation on a higher level is always in part the consequence of a proper response to the historic factors and forces which shatter and destroy the self's premature completion.

Sometimes Kunkel identifies the redeemed self too completely with the "we" of the community and on a higher level with God himself. On the first level he is in danger of obscuring the tension between the self and even the best community and on the second level

he obscures the distance between man and God which remains even for the soul which is opened to God.

This is an invaluable book particularly for religious leaders. It will give new and more concrete meaning to the cure of souls and take us a further step in relating psychological science with the wisdom residing in the Christian interpretation of redemption.

R. N.

FREEDOM, FORGOTTEN AND REMEMBERED by Helmut Kuhn, Chapel Hill. \$2.75.

THE HIDDEN ENEMY by Heinz Pol, Julian Messner Co. \$2.50.

Mr. Pol, a former liberal democratic journalist of Germany who has contributed many thoughtful analyses of German conditions to our thought, contends in this volume that we fail to understand the German peril if we try to count either the Nazis or the anti-Nazis. He thinks that the two main theses about Germany at the moment are both wrong. The one is that all Germans are really Nazis. And the other is that Germany as a whole will be healthy again, once the Nazis are eliminated. Mr. Pol regards the Pan-German movement in the German military aristocracy as older, more dangerous and more stubborn than Nazism. For that reason a peace with the German army, at the price of purging the Nazis would be calamitous. It would merely eliminate the most corrupt version of the German evil but would add new prestige to predatory tradition of the military caste.

In elaborating this thesis Mr. Pol gives us some interesting lights on Germany history; but he is inclined to con-

sider the German problem in too narrow terms. The political ineptness of Germany can not be measured by studying the history of the Pan-German league. An adequate study would have to include the whole social history and modern Germany and center particularly upon the inability of both the bourgeois and the proletarian classes to break the power of the military aristocracy.

But Helmut Kuhn's profound book shows that even such a social political study would not delve deeply enough into the German problem. Kuhn distinguishes between the rejection of freedom by Nazism in an act of despair and the forgotten freedom of the western democratic world. He looks at the dynamic corruption of Nazism against the background of the static corruption of the bourgeois world.

In a sense his whole book is an exposition of the Biblical text of the seven devils "who found the house swept and garnished," that is of evil rushing into a spiritual vacuum. The moral relativism, pragmatism and religious decay of the western world are, in his opinion the spiritual vacuum into which the seven Nazi devils entered to make the last estate worse than the first.

Kuhn's is a profound and moving book. One can not arrive at self-righteous conclusion about the German malady after reading it. But neither is one able to find any easy way out of the present tragedy. The possibility of Germany's regeneration is considered in terms of the necessity of a regeneration of our whole western world. Kuhn believes that nothing could be worse than a purely military victory over Germany, if the victorious cause failed to contain some of those higher religious and moral elements which alone could persuade the Germans that the defeat was deserved

and thus become the basis of their contrition and renewal.

This is the best of all the books which have been written on the German tragedy. Its insights are explicitly drawn from the Christian faith.

R. N.

WHAT KIND OF REVOLUTION, by

William D. Herridge, Little Brown and Co. \$1.75.

This very vigorous little book is particularly significant because of its authorship. Mr. Herridge was the Canadian minister to Washington in the early days of the Roosevelt administration. Also he is the brother-in-law of the former conservative prime minister of Canada, R. B. Bennett. He sought to organize a new political party in Canada a few years ago but was generally held suspect by the Canadian left, probably on the ground that a brother-in-law of Bennett could not be as honestly radical as his pronouncements seemed to be.

Perhaps this book will allay such suspicions because the author is almost catastrophical radical. He is convinced that if modern technical society can not discover a way of achieving "total use" it will destroy itself and he rightly points out that all the marvels of war-time production accentuate, rather than mitigate, the prospect of self-destruction. He is afraid that modern capitalism will seek to avoid its doom by organizing an anti-Russian front and that present tendencies all point to such a direction. America will probably overcome its original inclination to enter into competition with Britain in a life and death struggle in order to unite with Britain in this more gigantic struggle.

Mr. Herridge is not completely clear on how the catastrophe is to be averted

by the solution of "total use" though he is quite certain that communism is not the way out and that various nations might, according to various historical traditions, achieve the goal of bringing the industrial process under social control. The value of this book lies not so much in detailed and sober plans as in the sense of alarm, expressed by a thoughtful political leader of yesterday. Though a former admirer of the New Deal, the author has some critical things to say about present tendencies in Washington. He thinks that Harry Hopkins is a liberal "who believes that reformers are peace time characters who should give way in war to men of iron. Mr. Hopkins did not give way but became a man of iron." He rightly characterizes Hull as "an old laissez-faire liberal gallantly crusading for a cause well lost.—An old liberal is a particularly deadly type of new Tory."

TIME—THE REFRESHING RIVER,

by Joseph Needham, The MacMillan Co. \$3.50.

"The saints under the altar cry 'O Lord, how long, how long?' To speak of the inevitability of our higher integrated level is to say nothing of when it will come." So Professor Needham concludes his volume.

One of the most interesting aspects of Mr. Needham's frequent excursions out of his own field of brachemistry into the enormous question of an adequate world view has to do with his classical Christian view of human nature as a factor in progressive social integration and retrogression. As an Anglo-Catholic who is deeply religious he clearly assumes man's need of God and the significance of psychological elements in the idea of pro-

gress. However, at no point in this volume of essays and lectures given between 1932 and 1942 does one find the word sin or an overt reference to why the social process supported as Dr. Needham is convinced it is by organic science is so thwarted in its trend toward the good and the just. To be sure he recognizes that Satan is functioning. "The devil, as Hippalytus said long ago, may resist the cosmic process, but the last victory will not be his." Yet one lays down this superb and stimulating volume feeling that its weakness is its failure to deal at all realistically with human nature; that the writer is too rationalistic in his analysis of progress and that the influence of Darwin, Hebert Spencer and of Marx, plausible as they are in his hands, need counter balancing by more insights from the history of Israel and the thunderings of Amos.

Before pursuing Needham's essays it is important to point to the fact that Cambridge scientists are not without relevance these days nor wholly lost in their rational pursuits.

Some months ago Professor H. A. Hodges engaged in an enquiry having to do with the new version of the struggle between science and religion. He developed in a series of papers his thesis that the real issue for us today is not the old battle between the teachings of science and those of Christianity, but is the struggle between the spirit and temper of our modern scientific age and the Christian outlook on life. He defines this as an absolute conflict. To the casual it may seem no struggle at all. Hodges points out that modern man, a technologist, as distinct from Christian man, struggles with nature and with other men who get in his way. The Christian, on the other hand, puts his energies into the struggle with that in

himself and others which unfits them for real community. Modern scientific man takes his character and aims for granted and works to perfect his tools. Christian man is concerned to bring his character and his aims under the judgment of God. Hodges point is that we cannot choose. We must have both of these contributions. The method of modern science is one of the great achievements of the human intellect. Precise observation precedes brilliant success. There is no discipline like it. The Christian needs not only the disciplines but the results of such technical advancement. The Christian must become modern and scientific but must on no account become absorbed into modern technology because the Christian has the clue to the reason, the motive, the ends and the blocks.

On this one point Professor Needham is less clear than Professor Hodges, that is, the point that unless the Christian pushes on in the struggle against evil in himself and recognizes his human helplessness in that struggle, the social process is dreadfully muddled rather than refreshed.

However, Professor Needham has his own contribution. He has humility, passion for social justice, and awareness of God, elements not always found in a scientist of his stature. For twenty-five years he has been preoccupied with history as a more intriguing pastime than golf or cricket, and with the bearing of religion upon science and history. He is not caught in the contemporaneity of communism because he sees God in the process of nature and of history. His faith that in time, that bridge-head between the known and the unknown, we have a concretion which man neglects at his peril, a refreshing river, a span long enough for the as yet untried mutations,

is a contagious faith. In this period when Christians are tempted to abandon their work for socialism and their insistence upon justice in history because of their awareness of the complexities and relativities of the situation it is well to be confronted once more by the somewhat simple Christian devotion of a scientist to whom the discovery of society is still new and for whom his science must be more than technology. While I think Professor Needham is weak in his short-run analysis, I think he is strong in his long-run analysis. While he errs in the direction of optimistic liberal hope, yet he is strong in his belief that the world of science to which he has given his life is clue to part of the meaning of history and testimony to God's presence in the process. His too simple passage from organic evolution to social integration is hard to bear but his willingness to act upon the belief that "politics are nothing but the attempt to objectify the most advanced ethics in the structure of society, to enmesh the ideal ethical relations in the real world," seems to one reader a needed correction in this day.

After all, do we or do we not believe that God's purposes are supreme and that given time and the resources of His universe, He will use even such sinful instruments as men to the end of more justice, more equilibrium, more love than now seems likely? This is not to plead a world view which envisages a neat, static, perfect Kingdom on earth. Such a view is unthinkable. It is perhaps to urge that there must be and can be more overt cooperation with the cosmos to the end that men may live rather than die, may let live rather than crush, may inch along with God toward that purification of history which makes of time a refreshing river.

Winnifred Wygal.